

A RANGE EXTENSION AND A NEW SYNONYM
FOR *ASTRAGALUS POLARIS* BENTH.

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In a discussion of *Astragalus* sect. *Polares* (Rydb.) Barneby I have mentioned (1964, p. 370) sect. *Vesicularia* Gontsch. (in Komarov, 1946, p. 51, 877) as a possible synonym, but as the sectional typus, *A. atlasovi* Kom., was known to me only from descriptions I could make no positive statement. Now through the kindness of Dr. I. T. Vassilczenko I have been privileged to borrow an authentic example of *A. atlasovi*: basin of Anadyr' river, 27. VII. 1933, fl., fr., *Chashevy* 1393, LE, perhaps the basis of Gontscharov's record (l. c.) of the species from Anadyrskiy Kray. The plant matches in fine detail some Alaskan specimens of *A. polaris* Benth., and leaves little doubt that *A. atlasovi* (Komarov in Feddes Repert. 13: 229. 1914. — "Legi 7. VII. 1909 in peninsulae Kamtshatka valli centrali in alpibus Kaschchan non procul a pago Pustshina.") and *A. polaris*, described from plants collected by Berthold Seeman in 1849 at Eschscholtz Bay, Alaska (BM!) are taxonomic synonyms in a strict sense, although the Siberian plant represents the phase of the species with relatively narrow, fusiform pods which was segregated in Alaska as *Homalobus amblyodon* Rydb.

The range of *A. polaris*, known up to the present only from western coastal and interior montane Alaska (Barneby, 1964, map 39), is now seen to be amphi-Beringian. This is, of course, a familiar pattern of dispersal, but has particular interest in *Astragalus*, for *A. polaris* is the first member of the genus with the chromosome number $x = 12$ to be recorded from Asia, where the basic number 8 is virtually ubiquitous. Asiatic groups have contributed a number of species to the astragaline flora of North America, but traffic in the reverse direction through Beringia has not been recognized hitherto.

Starting from the assumption that the plant from

Anadyr' is indeed conspecific with Kamtchatkan *A. atlasovi*, an assumption fully supported by the protologue of the latter, the monotypic sect. *Vesicularia* Gontsch. (1946) automatically falls into the synonymy of sect. *Polares* (Rydb.) Barneby, based on *Phaca* sect *Polares* Rydb. (1929).

LITERATURE CITED

- BARNEBY, R. C. 1964. Atlas of N. American Astragalus. Mem. N. Y. Bot. Gard. vol. 13.
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